

BANNER OF PROGRESS.

VOL. II.

SAN FRANCISCO, SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 29, 1868.

NO. 8.

LITERARY.

For the Banner of Progress.

Belief.

Belief will not account us much
Unless we comprehend it;
We must the solid matter touch,
Moreover, teach it to be such,
Ere doubting will amend it.
Who never doubts has much to learn
From Matter and from Spirit;
Yet many with rare ardor burn—
They can a Shadow just discern—
The Substance, they re not near it.
I sometimes fancy that mankind
Love darkness more than light,
Some men are thankful they are blind,
Because they more of pleasure find
In their continual night.
To have belief—why, one must keep
His thoughts in working trim!
It is far easier to sleep!
But then, good friends, who wants to weep
When comes the harvest hymn?
Who wants to live in slavish fear,
Nor dare to use the voice?
They bravely seek a heavenly sphere,
Who build their tabernacles near
Where Spirit-fountains rejoice!
Why fear in fear on ancient creeds—
Salvation for the few?
My Soul a sweeter gospel reads—
That God, who knoweth all our needs,
To all is just and true.

H. ABINGTON DYER.

San Francisco, Jan., 1868.

COMMUNICATIONS.

RATIONAL ASPECT OF SPIRITUALISM, ANCIENT AND MODERN.

NUMBER EIGHT.

However hard men may strive to turn aside the stream of evidence that flows through the centuries of the past, showing that the great orb of day was originally held to be the God of the Universe (and by many people so regarded still), strive in vain, for the reason, that no one fact in the history of the religious formulas of several nationalities in bygone ages is more clearly and fully manifested to the senses of every person who will take the necessary trouble to examine into the subject matter, as it stands truthfully recorded.

"Zeus is the first, Zeus the thunderer" is the last. Zeus is the head, Zeus is the middle, and by Zeus were all things made. Zeus is male, immortal, Zeus is female. Zeus is the foundation of the earth, and of the starry heaven. Zeus is the Breath of all things. Zeus is the rushing of indefatigable fire. Zeus is the root of the sea. He is the sun and moon... his eyes the sun and the opposing moon, his unfathomable Mind the royal incorruptible Ether." (*Orphic Fragments*.)

"The Cabbalists spoke of Adam as hermaphrodite. Phanes is male and female. Enos is two-fold in nature."

"But any one who cheerfully celebrates Zeus in songs of triumph shall completely attain to understanding; him that leads merely to the way to wisdom, that places knowledge upon suffering, firmly to remain." (*Æschylus, Agamemnon*, 175-178.)

"But the God Zeus gives both good and evil, sometimes to one, and sometimes to another; for he can all things." (*Odyssey*, iv. 236.)

According to the philosophy of the ancient Chaldeans, Bel-Saturn is the Father who is and remains the primal Cause of all that exists, the One Principle never named, but passed over in silence by the Babylonians and other Orientals. "And they constitute Two Principles, one Male, (the Spirit), and the other Female, (Matter), corresponding to the Greek Uranos and Ge, the Roman Cœlum and Terra, Heaven and Earth, the Sun and the Earth-goddess, Bel and Multia. Mars and Venus, Apason (the Supreme Light, Taunt, Thoth the Sun), the original male Potenz and Tasmith the feminine Matter, Baal and Belis or Astarte, Osiris and Isis, Dionysus and Demeter, Tezcatlipoca and Tonacacihua (in Mexico), Saturn and his wife Ops the Earth-goddess, Adam and Eve, Ormuzd (Adonis) and Tanais (Athena), Elion (Baal-Berith) and Berith his goddess, the Two first Principles of all things. The same Two Principles are found among the Mexicans."

"Let those who fall (in war) be kindly received by the Sun and the Earth, who are the Father and Mother of all... O Lord most gracious to men, Lord of Battles, All-Ruler, whose name is Tezcatlipoca, God invisible and imperceptible! We entreat thee that those whom thou lettest fall in this war may be taken up into the abode of the Sun, that they may be gathered to the heroes fallen in previous wars; there they enjoy eternal pleasures, they celebrate in everlasting songs of praise our ruler, the Sun." "The Indian chief, Tecumseh, declared the Sun to be his Father and the Earth his Mother."

The archaeologist, Lepsius, informs us that sun-worship was the primitive national religion of the Egyptians. "Ra was the Sun. Not Ammon, but Ra, is the real king of the gods." The celebrated Christian historian, Mosheim, tells us that "everything that goes to make up the Christian religion emanated from Egypt."

The ancient religious sect of India, known as Brahmins or Brahmas of Hindostan, recognized the Sun as God, or the Great God of the Universe; but they had also inferior gods, who, by a peculiar faith of the people, were metamorphosed into anything they wished to deify; in some instances, these gods were regarded on good things, as clarified butter and the like; the worshippers striking regular bargains with them for the fulfillment of their wishes, in con-

sideration of value received in the shape of a sacrifice. This kind of traffic is on a par with that of Jacob and his God. "And Jacob vowed a vow, saying, If God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on, so that I come again to my Father's house in peace; then shall the Lord be my God: and this stone, which I have set up for a pillar, shall be God's house: and of all that thou shalt give me, I will surely give a tenth unto thee." (*Gen*, xxviii. 20.)

There is a loftiness of tone running through nearly all the devotional exercises of the ancient worshippers of the Sun, much of which contains sublimity of language, and elevation of thought, beautifully expressed, that even in our day is rarely met with; many of the recorded prayers of ancient date, are couched in a form highly pleasing to read, owing to their easy flow of harmonious construction.

Here are one or two examples:

"O Divine Æther, and ye swift-winged breezes, and ye fountains of rivers, and countless dimpling of the waves of the deep, and thou Earth, Mother of all, and to the all-seeing orb of the Sun, I appeal." (*Æschylus, Prometheus*.)

"To Æther."

"O thou that hast the might on high always untried of Zeus, a portion of the Stars and Sun and Moon, all-subduer, fire-breathing, that kindles all that live! Æther, that givest light on high, best rudiment of the world! shining growth, light-bringing, star-radiant! calling on, I beseech thee tempered to be serene." (*Orphic Hymn*, v.)

It is not necessary to go to Mosheim, or to any other historian of the Jewish and Christian religions, for evidence of the origin of those forms, rites, and ceremonies, for the obvious reason that the Bible itself contains abundant testimony to prove, beyond peradventure, that all the main features of the Bible; that is to say, the principal ideas and doctrines, were drawn directly from Egyptian traditions and religious literature. The difficulty in the way, and that which has kept back a knowledge of these facts, has been of a three-fold character. First, the bigotry and intolerance, prevailing through fourteen or fifteen centuries of our era, prevented the publishing of any or all knowledge touching matters even suspected of the slightest conflict with Holy Mother Church. I was made witness to a specimen of this meddling, only a few days since. Happening in at the office of a friend in this city, he showed me a purchase he had made, of an ancient book, the date of which is 1629; the work is of a scientific character, relating to polarity and magnetism, with kindred subjects, printed in Latin. Now, before this work could be permitted to go to press, it became necessary, in accordance with the laws established by the Church, that it should undergo a rigid inspection by persons in the interest of the faith; and the second or third page bears the certificate of no less than three censors, who had carefully examined the manuscripts, which occupied from the 17th of Jan., 1629, to the 4th of August, of the same year. Second, the changing nature of all the ancient forms of language, together with the constant shifting and fusing the names of supposed attributes of Gods, and all other things connected with ancient Sun and Fire worship. And, thirdly owing to much ignorance, mistranslations innumerable are known to have been made, all the way down from the earliest period of history to the present century; in addition to this, there has been more or less shameless dishonesty practiced by men of learning, all for the glory of holy religion, and the welfare of the Church militant. Forgeries have been proven in many instances, committed by some of the early Fathers of the Church; tampering with manuscripts has been a common practice in all Church history; so that with fanaticism, changling of names and language, outright dishonesty, all of which has occupied very many ages, it is at this day a somewhat difficult task to unravel and separate the false from the true. But thanks to the long prevailing bitterness and hatred fostered in the bosom of the Church itself, through a thousand years of unmitigated wrong and malevolence, torture and martyrdom, murder and rapine, we at this day are not left without a witness of all the monstrous inhumanity inflicted by the ignorance and worst passions of man upon man.

J. D. PIERSON.

"The voice of the Lord is upon the waters: the God of glory thundereth: the Lord is upon many waters." (*Psa*, xlii. 3.)

RELATION OF MIND AND PHYSIQUE.

An examination of the nervous system, and the manner of conveying the mandates of the will from one part of the animal mechanism to another, may serve to give us a clue to the constituent substance of mind, and its connection with more palpable matter.

A nerve-fiber consists of a delicate thread—the axis filament—enveloped in an oil-like substance, which, in its turn, is enclosed in a thin investing sheath, or membranous tube. Many such fibers, bound together, constitute a nerve. The function of such a nerve-fiber, says Professor Draper, is indisputably of a physical kind, being the conveyance of influences from part to part. The axis filament is the line along which the translation occurs, the investing material being for the purpose of confining or insulating it, so as to prevent lateral escape. Such a construction is the exact counterpart of many electrical contrivances, in which a metallic wire is coated over with sealing-wax, or wrapped around with silk, the current being thus compelled to move in the wire, without any lateral escape. The ocean telegraphic cable affords another illustration on a more extended scale. Some of these nerve-fibers convey their influences to the interior, and are called centripetal; others convey them to the exterior, and are called centrifugal; but no difference in the structure of the two has been discovered. The influences ad-

vance along the line of the nerve-fiber with a velocity which is said to vary with the temperature of the mind to which it belongs. In the cold-blooded, it is much slower than in the hot. The progress has been estimated at eighty-five feet in a second in the frog, and two hundred in a man. These nerve-fibers are designated by physiologists as cerebro-spinal; there are sympathetic nerves, slightly differing from these.

The other portion of the nervous structure is vesicular; consisting of vesicles filled with a gray, granular material. Each vesicle has a thickened spot or nucleus upon it, and appears to be connected with one or more nerve-fibers; if with one, it is called unipolar; if with two, bipolar; if with more, multipolar, or stellate. Combined together, they constitute ganglia or nerve-centers, where influences may be preserved for a considerable time.

These three parts—the centripetal fiber, the vesicle, and the centrifugal fiber—constitute a simple nervous arc, which is found in the lowest form of animal life. As we ascend in the scale of life, this nervous system becomes more complicated, the arcs being, in anatomical language, commissured; nerve-fibers passing from each to its neighbors, bringing the whole into sympathy. The principle of dedication to special uses is carried out in the ganglia affected by light, sound, or odors. The centripetal nerve-fibers carry the impressions of these agencies to appropriate ganglion; these are so coalesced as to form masses of considerable size, which are commissured with those for ordinary motion. Superimposed on the spinal column is the cerebrum, the seat of ideas, thought, reason. This cannot produce motion of itself, but is obliged to use the telegraphic apparatus of the nerve-fibers to send its mandates to the muscles, causing them to contract and expand so as to produce locomotion. The intelligence of an animal is approximately measured by the relative size of the cerebrum and the sensory ganglia.

Now it is plainly indicated that intelligence does not consist in the convolutions of the brain, but that this is an ingeniously contrived mechanism to bring the more refined spiritual organism, the real thought-power, into relationship with the more crude matter of our physical systems. If this is not so, the argument of the Materialist is unanswerable, that when the organism of the brain perishes, the mind must cease to exist.

Assuming, then, that astronomical science indicates, that when the earth had rolled on in its individualized existence for inconceivable ages, it gradually became so matured as to require, in the economy of Nature, an overseer upon its surface, to assist in beautifying its fauna and flora, and subduing its various elements and forces to use—it is plain that a being would be required possessing the two essential elements of thought, spiritual perceptions, and affection, relating him to disembodied spirits; and a physical body embracing in its composition all the crude elements of the earth's surface, to enable him to produce direct effects upon the theater of his action, and draw sustenance therefrom. Were this being merely spiritual and intellectual, no improvement could be made upon the earth's surface; were he a mere animal, destitute of the spiritual and intellectual, no plans, contrivances, or triumphs over Nature's forces could be achieved. In man, we find these two principles so delicately, accurately, and perfectly blended, as to meet the requirements. In the above sketch of the nervous system, we see the mechanism of the connecting link between the refined matter of the spirit and the crude matter of the physique. In these facts we find a clue to a rational explanation of those psychological and spiritual phenomena which so puzzle the would-be scientific. They are posed because they ignore any spiritual existence acting through the physical. They deny the existence of anything which cannot be reached by the scalpel, the crucible, or the microscope. They commit the unphilosophical blunders of considering only one-half of the facts in the case.

Before the advent of modern Spiritualism, the writer saw Leroy Sunderland psychologize a lady in the presence of an audience of several hundred, throwing her into entire unconsciousness; while in this condition, a dentist was called upon the stand, and a large molar tooth was by him extracted—the lady not exhibiting a twinge of a muscle, or any indication of pain. In that case, a spirit in a physical body threw his spiritual or magnetic forces upon the physical organism of another; seizing, overbearing, and perhaps paralyzing the nervous centers through which consciousness and memory are manifested, and then easily controlling the entire system. When what was here done by a spirit in the body, is done by a spirit out of the body, we have the phenomena of spirit control and mediumship. I propose in future articles to consider more at length the relation of the spirit-world to the mundane world, as the real inspirer of scientific progress, mechanical inventions, and moral feelings, which are destined eventually to raise the family of man above wars, pestilence, prostitution in and out of wedlock, poverty, and the antagonisms of professions, trades, and business of every kind, to which it is now a prey.

JOHN ALLYN.

ATHEISM AND SPIRITUALISM.

"Beat the Gods, and the priests will tremble."—*Talmud*.

BRO. TODD.—I want to have a little quiet talk with you on the above subject; not a controversy, only comparing of notes. In your lecture on Immortality, you introduce an Atheist—"an imaginary character," you say; "a man of straw," which can offer no resistance. Perhaps an imaginary Atheist served your purpose better than a real one would have done; yet, at the same time, if a *bona fide* Atheist can be of any service to you, it is very probable that one or two, or as many as the case should demand, might be found. I have heard a great deal said of there being no real Atheists; and it seems very idle talk indeed. If no serious doubts have existed in the minds of men in regard to the existence of God, for what end are the many learned works, such as Paley's "Natural Theology," written? Why so much labor to defeat the arguments of people who are only myths? I have heard men say the same of the unbeliever in the plenary inspiration of the Bible—the Infidel. And, Bro. Todd, you know that there are Infidels.

But what is an Atheist? Says Webster: "One who disbelieves or denies the existence of a God or supreme intelligent Being." Now, the task of finding such an one is not difficult. D'Holbach expresses himself very clearly on that subject; for example: "Do not let us attribute her (Nature's) work to an imaginary cause, which has no other existence than in our brain." Read Mrs. Ernestine L. Rose's lecture in defense of Atheism, and doubt, if you can, her sincerity in her unbelief in the existence of God. She says: "Whatever good you are willing to do for the sake of your God, I am fully as willing to do for the sake of man." What have you to say to Frances Wright, another free, noble woman? Listen! She says: "Imagine a Deity under any fashion of existence; how are our dreams concerning Him in an imaginary heaven to affect our happiness, or our conduct on a tangible earth? Affect it indeed they may for evil, but how for good? The idea of an unseen Being, ever at work around and about us, may afflict the human intellect with idle terrors, but can never guide the human practice to what is rational and consistent with our nature." (*A Few Days in Athens*.)

There are no lack of living, honest, avowed Atheists. George J. Holyoake, of England, is an example. He served six months in prison for the privilege of being an Atheist. The number of Atheists, known as such, would be greatly increased, but for the disqualifications to which the acknowledgment subjects all who are bold and honest enough to make it. God is the key-word into many of our secret societies; into remunerative political offices; and into all our courts of justice. All this is very complimentary to the Atheist. First, it is an acknowledgment of his existence; secondly, it is a proof of a belief in his honor. Yet the Atheist, not wishing to be a martyr to the follies of men, has often to improvise a God, a proxy to pass him through the theological obstructions which occur in the journey of life. This, at present, is very easy to do. The Atheist, being generally a person of intellect and principle, has therefore embodied many excellent ideas in the enunciation of his belief—excellent enough to captivate the Theist, who, in order to be able to receive them, has deified them. Thus, the aggregated forces and qualities of the universe—Nature—is the Atheist's highest conception of power. But men in their blind idolatry to the word "God," in order to accept the Atheist's platform, called *Nature* God—binding a theology upon the Atheist whether he would or not. Another class deifies man; as if man could be more than man!

"I dare do all that may become a man;
Who dares do more is none."

Everything in heaven and on earth, real or imaginary, has, at one time or other, by some class, been nick-named *God*. A word so easily transferred from object to object, from idea to idea, cannot be very definite; a word which can mean anything, means nothing.

Indians and other barbarous nations recede before the advance of civilization; so also does God before the advance of science. The time is coming, and now is, when men will as soon think of asking God to interfere with an eclipse, or the presence of a comet—as they formerly did—as to ask Him to regulate the weather in our behalf, or to cure the sick. The thunderbolt or the earthquake will be no greater evidence of a special Providence than the rising of the sun, or any other astronomical phenomenon, is considered now to be.

But it was not my intention to make a plea for Atheism; I know too well the opprobrium attached to the name, to be willing to have it applied to me. So, if you please, we will talk of another idea, attached to the word by you, namely, an unbelief in the immortality of the soul, or a future existence. No such corollary can be deduced from Atheism. A future life no more proves the existence of God than the present life. If, as Spiritualism affirms, we, by a natural process inherent in us, continue to live in another state after the dissolution of our bodies, I cannot see that the act of God shows itself more plainly in such a change than it does in our advent to this

life. To say that a belief in God is necessary to a belief in Spiritualism, is to say, that a future life depends on the will of God—or on a miracle. This is the ground occupied by the Christian. He denies our inherent immortality. He affirms that God alone hath immortality. He maintains, that, by a miracle, Christ rose from the dead, "the first-fruits of them that slept"; that our immortality depends on the resurrection of our bodies, which is also to be accomplished by a miracle, by a physical impossibility—but to God nothing is impossible! The Atheist has no conception of the accomplishment of an impossibility; consequently, he can have no belief whatever in the Christian idea of immortality. But Spiritualism declares a future life to be as natural as the present one, and is therefore acceptable by the Atheist, *when demonstrated*.

The following excerpta from Cicero's *Natura Deorum* are interesting, and illustrate, somewhat, Atheistic ideas:

"If you should ask me what God is, or what His character and nature are, I should follow the example of Simonides; who, when Hiero the tyrant proposed the same question to him, desired a day to consider of it. When he required his answer the next day, Simonides begged two days more; and as he kept constantly desiring double the number which he had required before, instead of giving his answer, Hiero, with surprise, asked him his meaning in doing so. 'Because,' says he, 'the longer, I meditate on it the more obscure it appears to me.' 'It would be dangerous,' I believe, to take the negative side before a public auditory; but it is very safe in a discourse of this kind, and in this company. I, who am a priest, and who think that religious ceremonies ought sacredly to be maintained, am certainly desirous to have the existence of the Gods, which is the principal point in debate, not only fixed in opinion, but proved to a demonstration; for many notions flow into and disturb the mind, which sometimes seem to convince us that there are none."

"I really believe there are many people so savage that they have no thoughts of a Deity. What think you of Diagoras, who was called the Atheist; and of those who after him? Did not they plainly deny the very essence of a Deity? Protagoras, of Abdera, whom you just now mentioned, the greatest sophist of his age, was banished by order of the Athenians from their city and territories, and his books were publicly burned, because these words were in the beginning of his treatise concerning the Gods: 'I am unable to arrive at any knowledge whether there are, or are not, any Gods.' This treatment of him, I imagine, restrained many from professing their disbelief of a Deity, since the doubt of it only could not escape punishment."

"Diagoras, who is called the Atheist, being at Samothrace, one of his friends showed him several pictures of people who had endured very dangerous storms; 'See,' says he, 'you who deny a Providence, how many have been saved by their prayers to the Gods.' 'Aye,' says Diagoras, 'I see those who were saved, but where are those painted who were shipwrecked?'"

Bro. Todd, will you not now allow that there is such a being as an Atheist, and that he may believe in Spiritualism? that a person may not believe in immortality, and yet be a Theist? that there is no connection between the ideas of Atheism and Spiritualism, but that they stand each independent of, and deriving no support from, the other?

You have also introduced the names of Volney, Rousseau, Voltaire, and Feuerbach, so as to leave the impression that they were reputed Atheists, which they were not. Voltaire wrote against Atheism. You should "give the Devil his due," you know.

ÆSOP, JR.

WHERE DOES THE BLOW COME IN?

EDITORS BANNER OF PROGRESS.—In conversation with an acquaintance recently, he informed me that an article would soon appear in the *Gem Advertiser*, which would be a hard blow against Spiritualism; and added, that perhaps I would like to reply to it. I accepted the challenge on the spot, and requested a copy as soon as issued. Perhaps it was presumption on my part, to accept a challenge like this, it being entirely out of my line of business to write upon any subject, political, moral, or religious; but a copy of the *Gem* is before me, and in it the aforementioned article, which is to annihilate Spiritualism, and send her votaries back upon the dry, musty mysteries of the past, to feast their hungry souls upon "endless misery and deep damnation." Therefore, I will hasten to reply to his remarks. He says: "Of all the idiocies and fallacies presented to the modern age, Spiritualism is to be classed among the foremost." I would ask the writer how he knows that Spiritualism is a fallacy; he does not prove it in his article, neither does he say by what process of reasoning or investigation he arrives at this conclusion. His simple assertion, that it is a fallacy, is not worth the snap of a finger—no more than my asserting that it is not a fallacy would be. It is a jumping at conclusions.

Again he says: "Pretending to hold communion with the spirits of the dead, they deny the power to any but a selected few." I do not know who they are, that pretend to hold communion with the spirits of the dead; perhaps the writer will tell us in his next article. For myself, I wish him to distinctly understand, that I make no pretensions, but positively assert that I have, whenever opportunity has been afforded, communed and conversed with those who were dear to me while in the flesh, and are still dear, since they passed through the change which men call death. If the writer has been imposed upon by a class of individuals pretending to hold communion with the dead—has received no satisfaction—it proves the old adage true, that "dead men tell no tales."

The Banner of Progress.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 29, 1868.

OFFICE, 532 CLAY STREET, UP STAIRS.

BENJAMIN TODD & CO.,
PUBLISHERS AND PROPRIETORS.

BENJAMIN TODD, W. H. MANNING, EDITORS.

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All communications designed for publication in this paper should be addressed "EDITORS OF THE BANNER OF PROGRESS." All letters in regard to the business of the paper should be addressed to "BENJAMIN TODD & CO."

Sabbatarianism.

We refuse to acknowledge the right of any man or body of men to practice customs contrary to the morals of Christianity, even upon the plea of liberty of conscience. We allow no conscientious right of the Chinese to sell his daughters, as the religion of Confucius commands. We prohibit the Mohammedan from his conscientious duty of putting infidels to the sword. We will not legalize the Mormon's polygamy nor the Spiritualist's free love upon any plea of conscience. The Jew may not store the false prophet or dreamer of dreams to death, according to the command of Moses. We refuse the infidel the right to establish his gambling hell, and we declare the sale of lottery tickets a crime punishable by law. We do all this because the governments of the United States of America are not Jewish, Mohammedan, or Mormon governments, but Christian governments. Christianity is the basis of the common law of the land, and its jurisprudence is founded on Christian morality, and has been so from the very foundation of our nation. The Sabbath law is a part of our national Christianity, and the attempt to repeal it is a part of a systematic attempt, on the part of infidels, to deprive our nation of its Christian character, to introduce the Red Republic, to make America what France was in the days of Danton and Robespierre, and the Reign of Terror. But the decisions of our courts, with entire unanimity, oppose this infidel attempt. Judge Story, Judge Kent, and indeed all who have had occasion to deliver judgment on the matter—in whatever State of those which enact the Sabbath law—have decided that the Sabbath law is a part of our national Christianity and of our common law.—*California Christian Advocate.*

The effort to enact and continue in force certain laws compelling a religious observance of Sunday, or any other day, cannot succeed upon the plea of morality. All the above special pleading may satisfy the bigot and religious fanatic, but it is far from being satisfactory to the close and careful reasoner, and the lover of individual liberty. The religionists have failed to establish their right to enforce the religious observance of Sunday by an appeal to the authority of the Bible, because Saturday is the day set apart as the Sabbath in that book. They have not succeeded any better in appealing to the example of the founder of Christianity, for he was a Sabbath-breaker, and not a Sabbath-maker. They cannot rely upon the Constitution of the country, for that document makes no mention of the Sabbath, and only refers to Sunday incidentally as a day on which public business cannot be transacted. They can only rely upon influencing State and local legislation, to secure the passage of laws and ordinances making acts performed on Sunday criminal, which, if done on any other day, are not only harmless, but beneficial and right. This consideration brings us at once to their plea of morality, as an argument for the enforcement of Sunday laws. It is true that our laws prohibit gambling, whether practiced by Christian or infidel, Jew or Pagan; but it is made an offense if committed on any day of the week. No exception is made, and no greater penalty imposed, for gambling on Sunday. And so of every other immorality, including free love and polygamy, whether practiced by Christian or Spiritualist, Mormon or Gentile. By our Constitutions and the common law, whatever is an offense upon one day is criminal when committed on any and all days. It is only when religious zealots undertake to make an exception in favor of one day above another, upon which acts perfectly innocent in themselves shall not be performed, if they can prevent by Sunday laws, that the tyranny over men's consciences begins. On the score of morality, they fail to make headway against natural rights, and are equally weak in a reliance upon their own pretended revelation of the will of God. They are left, therefore, solely to their wits, in contriving such special legislation as will effect their purpose of driving the people into their religious organizations from sheer want of something to do that will not be a violation of the Sunday law.

The discussion of morals by religious organs is always one-sided; they claim all the morality for their sect, and denounce all other classes as immoral and irreligious. Yet we apprehend, if a sifting of the churches and of the community at large could be made, that the mass of the non-church-going people would be found, on the whole, as upright and honest in their daily lives as the most self-righteous Pharisee that ever made a prayer or listened to a sermon. It is not the infidel, peculiarly, who establishes gambling hells; but they were Christians who established Mormonism and polygamy. They are not Spiritualists, exclusively, who indulge in the vagary of free love; but it is the Trinity Church corporation of New York that owns and receives a princely rental from houses of ill-fame in that city, as well as from gambling hells. And we are confident a similar state of things exists in other cities—perhaps even in San Francisco. It is pretty certain that large numbers of the clergy of all denominations can be pointed out, that are not exemplars of morality. But enough for the present.

VERILY, there be yet many vacant minds in the world.—*Chronicle.*

The *Chronicle* is one of the best examples of that fact that could be offered.

Swedenborgianism.

Under this head, the *Northwestern Christian Advocate*, has been giving the adherents of Emanuel Swedenborg a cold bath. It seems that the sectarians of the "New Church," or disciples of Swedenborg, have for some time coquetted with the "Evangelical" churches for a recognition from them of their right to be called Christians, and for fellowship with "Evangelical" denominations. The Methodist organ answers their overtures without sympathy and without remorse. It shows up some of the doctrines of Swedenborg in a most thoroughly critical manner, and exhibits their inconsistency with the plain meaning of the New Testament Scriptures. In fact, it completely renders ridiculous many of the assumptions of Swedenborg to interpret an "internal sense" for passages of Scripture, whose plain "external" sense is manifest enough. In our opinion, Swedenborg went beyond the limits of sound reason, when he attempted to foist upon the world a system of religion, of which he, like Mahomet, wished to be considered the divinely appointed prophet. So long as he remained within the domain of science and confined his investigations and enunciations to newly discovered facts, he was invincible to criticism. But he entered the boundless area of speculation, and undertook to proclaim as realities what were only the conclusions of an excited and religiously crazed imagination; he assumed to have visited a local hell and heaven, and to describe fully their inhabitants and the occupations in which they were engaged, and he claimed divine authority for proclaiming these things to the world. If he had confined himself to the determination of the facts that came under his observation through the operations of natural law—if he had exercised his wonderful gifts of clairvoyance and prescience in regard to the visits and communion of spirits from the other life—and had not attempted to invent a "science of correspondences" and a new dogmatic religion, he would have secured more respectful attention from the scientific, and would not have incurred the jealousy and enmity of the sectaries of the various denominational churches. His disciples, professing a belief in spirit communion, are everywhere as skeptical and bitter in regard to spirit manifestations as the most bigoted Calvinistic sect. Nevertheless, we do not perceive that other sects have any peculiar advantage, in matters of doctrine, over the "New Church." The "internal sense" of Swedenborg is just as sensible a dogma as the "internal evidence" of orthodoxy. And his located heaven and hell is as orthodox as anything in the creed of any sect. The truth is, the effort to establish a fixed standard of religious belief is and always has been a failure, and it will ever be so. Only the science of facts can have permanence in the mind of man, and the "internal evidence" therein contained is patent to the view of the commonest intellect, needing no interpreters privileged and educated to explain it.

"LISLE LESTER," in a correspondence to the *Banner of Light*, thus speaks of her and our friends in this city:

"Mr. and Mrs. Foye have been traveling in Nevada with eminent good fortune. Mrs. Ada Foye has done very much toward the advancement of the cause, not merely by her public services, but by private laudable efforts, which have proved of value to the friends of progress. When money was wanted to keep up the expense of a course of lectures in this city, she came to the rescue with the proceeds of a public séance, thus enabling the accumulated debt to be paid off and the lectures to continue. To such liberal, earnest souls, we can at least return the boon of gratitude, which, alas! is a rare treasure sometimes, even among those most benefited by the kindness. Mrs. Foye is a general favorite with the people, and is especially esteemed for her candor and sincerity."

Her reference to the two periodicals, on each side of the continent, upholding Spiritualism, is very appropriate:

"The *Banner of Light* is read with interest here, and our *BANNER OF PROGRESS* is also growing into importance. A very pretty idea is suggested in the names and location of these two papers; each a *Banner of the Spiritual faith*—one leading its army along the shores of the Atlantic, through the Eastern America, the other waving over the Pacific wing, and leading its army to the new America that sits so stately beside the sunset sea."

She might have mentioned the *Religio-Philosophical Journal*, at Chicago, as leading the "centr" of the Army of Progress, and her figure would have been complete.

A WOMAN'S OPINION OF THE ELECTIVE FRANCHISE.—Last Wednesday evening, according to announcement, Mrs. Laura De Force Gordon delivered a lecture at Platt's Hall, the subject being the "Elective Franchise." The gist of her theory, as developed at considerable length, is, that the elective franchise should be regulated by an educational standard. She believed that an educational standard ought to be, and eventually must be, established, and the sooner the people recognized such a necessity, and acted upon it, the sooner would the great danger which now threatened the nation be removed. The *Times* says the lecturer was listened to with much interest, and occasionally received tokens of the approbation of her audience.—*Oakland News.*

Such a proposition cannot safely be submitted to the people for adoption, for the reason that the ignorant and illiterate already have the ballot, and would not vote to disfranchise themselves. The only remedy now is like that adopted to subdue a prairie fire, namely, fighting it with fire; that is, putting ignorance against ignorance, and throwing in the votes of the more enlightened classes as a make-weight in the scale.

HERMAN SNOW, of 410 Kearny street, has for sale:

"DAWN": A Novel, by an anonymous author. The book is interesting, and will repay perusal. It is one of those which belong to the new Spiritualistic literature of the present, and is full of inspiration.

"LUCY ARLYN": A Romance, by J. T. Trowbridge. This is a work of similar characteristics with the above, but is very highly wrought, and carries the reader captive to the end by the varied scenes of the plot, which are often amusing as well as instructive.

MEETING OF SPIRITUALISTS FOR ORGANIZATION. A meeting of all Spiritualists, favorable to the formation of an effective working organization in this city, will be held at the office of Dr. J. M. Grant, No. 11 Geary street, near Kearny, on Wednesday evening next, at 8 o'clock. We hope the friends will come together resolved that a Society shall be formed that will have within itself the elements of power and success.

Defeat of the Bill to Repeal the Sunday Law.

The Sunday Law repeal defeat in the Assembly on yesterday, by a vote of 45 to 20, was a surprise to all parties concerned. During the debate the clergy of the city were largely represented on the floor of the House; Revs. Mr. Dwinelle, Mr. McDonald, Mr. Hill, Father Cotter, Father Scanlan, and Father Clark, being present during nearly the entire discussion. Mr. Oliver, of San Joaquin, made the longest and most effective speech of the day. Mr. Wolleb, of Sacramento, made a brief, dispassionate, but forcible statement of the repeal side of the argument. Mr. Farish, in his speech, outlined a bill, such as will be introduced and passed by the Assembly, it is claimed, before the close of the session. The Germans express great surprise and indignation concerning the vote of Messrs. Middleton and Papy, who were, they claim, pledged in writing to vote for the repeal.—*Daily Times.*

If the presence of the clergy in such numbers on the floor of the House, influencing and interfering in legislation, does not open the eyes of the people to the objects of that privileged class, we are wrongly impressed. We hope Mr. Farish, or some other representative of the people, will prepare a bill that shall secularize the day called Sunday, so that we may live and breathe on that day as freely as on other days.

DEPARTURES.—REV. S. D. SIMONDS, one of the oldest and most laborious of Methodist preachers in California, and now on the superannuated list, will sail for the Atlantic States on Saturday next. His family have been some months visiting in the East.—*California Christian Advocate.*

Superannuated sounds rather strange to those who know that Mr. Simonds is still in the prime of life. This dodge of placing ministers on the "superannuated" list, to prevent their preaching when they have become so far indoctrinated with the philosophy of Spiritualism that they cannot help teaching it to others, is too transparent to deceive the well informed. It is not much more than a year since Mr. Simonds was *starved* back into the Methodist Church by the California Conference, under the threat of expulsion for heresy! The vision of poverty of wife and children was too much for Bro. Simonds, and he succumbed. Poor superannuated preacher!

The following point is, as the lawyers say, "well taken":

"One medium is in Timbuctoo, And one in—say—Cape Horn will do; Both at same instant 'rap' for you. By the same spirit; and a fright you. That spirit is, if 'raps' are true, Ubiquitous as the Almighty."—*Dramatic Chronicle.*

How can any one know that the same spirit "raps" in two places at the same time, unless the questioner—"you" for instance—can also be in the two places at once? The thing is absurd, and refutes itself. No such manifestation is possible, and the "point" is not "well taken," as the lawyers say. Only a dunce would make such a point.

REV. WILLIAM TAYLOR, widely known in San Francisco in early days as a Methodist preacher, and now in London a new edition of "California Illustrated," and "Christian Adventures in South Africa," from his pen.—*Exchange.*

There are many people already too familiar with his Christian adventures in California, to have any desire to read of them in print. His "California Illustrated," if truthfully portrayed, would shed no luster on himself. It is singular that he could find no publisher of his "Illustrations," nearer to the scene of his adventures than London; for, truly, he is "widely" known in San Francisco. That is probably the reason that the place of publication and the locality of his "Illustrations" are so wide apart.

DIGGING FOR TREASURE.—A grandson of General Putnam, of Revolutionary fame, has a large gang of men at work near Seaside, Connecticut, digging for the long little sum of \$5,000,000, which the spirit of Benjamin Franklin tells him was buried there, in the shape of gold bars and precious stones, a number of years ago, by Spanish pirates.—*New York Herald.*

All we have to say in relation to the above is, that the "grandson of General Putnam" is an egregious fool, to whom some mischievous wag in the spirit world is endeavoring to teach common sense through the hard lesson of bitter disappointment. It is the only way in which some people can be taught.

STARVING THE WORKWOMEN.—In New York, one day, recently, a starving girl caused the arrest of her employer for refusing to pay her for making woollen pantaloons at sixteen cents per pair, while he, being a "middle man," received sixty cents for the work; and his wife kicked her out of doors because she demanded what was her just due.—*Exchange.*

The "Workwomen's Home," recently established in that city, will be apt to stop all that. Movements are on foot in this city for a similar institution, and we shall soon see the "Women's Co-operative Sewing Circle" in successful operation here. We shall publish all the details of the project as soon as we obtain them.

DO WE DESIRE to enter heaven as a Baptist, a Methodist, a Presbyterian, or a Christian?—*Pacific Coast Herald.*

As neither; but as man, the child of God. If we cannot enter our Father's house without a passport, like either of the above names, or any others, we will stay outside, and make a heaven of our own, where no such foolish distinctions shall be made, and where the *Herald* man shall be as welcome as though he were a Christian.

DEMOCRAT, n.—One who adheres to a government by the people, or favors the extension of the right of suffrage to all classes of men.—*Webster's Dictionary.*

A "government by the people," of course, includes women; and therefore, in our copy of Webster, we have defined "Democrat" to mean one who favors the extension of the right of suffrage to "all mankind."

THE BANNER OF PROGRESS complains that Fitz Smythe of the *Atlas* is particularly bitter on Spiritualists. That is just like Fitz Smythe. He is an awful fellow.—*Oakland News.*

Since he was placed on the Governor's staff, we suppose, he has become one of the "elect," like unto the Governor himself. But Fitz Smythe Evans should remember that political preferment is very evanescent.

GHAZELY HUMOR OF THE NEW YORK HERALD.—Captain William Dooly, of North Adams, was seriously if not fatally injured by having a log roll upon him last Saturday. This is not the first bill that has been killed by log-rolling.

Fitz Smythe of the *Atlas* must look to his laurels. The New York *Herald* itemizer is at present ahead in cold-blooded witicism upon death. Fitz will be trying his hand shortly.

Obituary.

Passed through "the portals of pearl," on the morning of Feb. 7th, from San Juan, the spirit of Mrs. L. M. Bickford. We received a telegraphic dispatch that afternoon at Grass Valley, requesting us to come the next morning, and assist in the ceremony of returning to mother Earth the form that she had kindly furnished our departed sister during her earth-life. The Methodists generously gave us the use of their church for the occasion.

Mrs. Bickford was a true Spiritualist. What the world calls death had no terrors for her; nor did she feel that there was any dark, shadowy voyage for her to pass through. Who, that has any knowledge of the facts and philosophy of our beautiful faith, would not feel thankful for Spiritualism, since it robs death of all its terrors? And what a happy thought it is, that the eastern horizon of Eternity bends down to the western horizon of Time, and when the light of earth grows dim in our physical vision, an angel hand draws aside the veil, and we pass through, born to the glorious light of immortality! There our loved and gone-before stand waiting to welcome us to their homes of love and fadeless beauty. The earth-form of those loved ones, when we last traced upon them, were shrunken, old, and scarred with disease and the conflicts of time. The glazed eye and pallid cheek told all too plainly of the departure of the spirit. But O, the scene is changed! Those pale and emaciated forms, that were laid down with so much loving care, have been exchanged for others, divinely fair, and radiant with immortal life. The sparkling eye, the clear white forehead, the clustering curls, and the rosy cheeks that come and go in the well rounded cheek with every pulsation of the heart, tell us that they have found the well-springs of immortal life.

MAGNETISM VS. SPIRITISM.—The Stockton *Herald* says that W. J. Collier, Esq., is delivering interesting lectures in that city on the subject of psychology. In these lectures Collier claims the phenomena of spiritism on scientific principles, and shows that disembodied spirits have nothing to do with said phenomena. We have always insisted that so soon as the investigation of this subject was taken up by competent persons and prosecuted on scientific principles, the "phenomena" would take their place with the science of magnetism, psychology, and clairvoyance, and would be classed with the phenomena of somnambulism, second sight and prophetic dreams. The professed spiritists not being competent to conduct any strictly scientific investigation of anything, being made up of charlatans, snuffers, enthusiasts, knaves, dupes, lunatics, and superstitious persons, have turned the whole thing into a foolish system of thaumaturgy. Undoubtedly there is something in spiritism; but there is nothing "spiritual" in it, and disembodied spirits have nothing whatever to do with the phenomena.—*Dramatic Chronicle.*

"Competent persons," and "scientific principles," indeed! We know this W. J. Collier very well. He is the most consummate charlatan that ever breathed. He is a journeyman printer, well known to the "craft" in this city. He knows as much of "scientific principles" as a he-goat, and will butt his head against them and against Spiritualism with equal effect. Among Spiritualists, he professes a belief in Spiritualism; but among the lunatics of Stockton and the *Dramatic Chronicle* office, he endeavors to account for spirit manifestations upon the hypotheses of psychology, mesmerism, mind-reading, etc.; about which subjects he is as much in the dark as he is upon the philosophy of Spiritualism. His psychological exhibitions in different parts of the State, a few years ago, were matters of derision and contempt to all who witnessed them.

A GOOD JOKE.—One evening during the revival at Taylorville, the officiating clergyman requested all penitent sinners to walk up to the cap—mourners' bench. Quite a number went forward, among whom one chap, who had been in the practice rather too freely. After they were all seated, the clergyman took a memorandum book, and commenced writing down the names of the penitents. He is the best plan to string them immediately." He proceeded in his work, and when he came to the name of the penitent, he paused, and called to the fact, when he replied, "I am afraid he's a crank, and I guess I won't string him."—*Quincy Union.*

To what a ridiculous pass has the Christian (?) Church arrived, when such scenes occur in its public meetings, under the direction of its ordained ministers! Elder Knapp himself is outdone in the revival at Taylorville. Verily, the acts of the clergy, as well as their dogmas, are resolved into absurdities.

BRO. TODD'S Lecture on "The Natural Evidences of Immortality" will be continued in our next number.

Brief and Pointed Paragraphs.

INDIANA church societies have masquerades. An editor in Arkansas named Balaam has Hannas for a partner.

THERE is many a slip between the cup and the lip, but one slips after the cup is drained by the lips. A LONDON cartoon says Miss Kellogg walks like an antelope—which we suppose is a round-about way of calling her a deer.

OF the one hundred and fifty thousand school teachers in the United States, over one hundred thousand are females.

SINCERITY is—speaking as we think; believing as we profess; acting as we profess; performing as we promise; and really being as we pretend to be.

ONE of the "Black Crook" girls sang in a New York Church the other Sunday, and Presbyterianism was duly shocked when it was found out.

A DIVINE preached on Sunday morning from the text: "Ye are the children of the devil"; on the afternoon of the same day, by a funny coincidence, from the text: "Children, obey your parents."

"WOMAN is a deusion, madam!" exclaimed a crusty old bachelor to a witty young lady. "And men are always hugging some deusion or other," was the quick retort.

"I RESORT to wine to stimulate my wits," said a young spendthrift to an old one. "Ah," replied the veteran, "that is the way I began, but now I have to resort to my wits to get my wine."

NO HARSH WORDS.—A couple celebrated their silver wedding in Philadelphia a few days ago, of whom it is said they never exchanged a harsh word during their wedded life of twenty-five years. We would state, for the benefit of those to whom it may seem incredible, that they are *deaf mutes*.

A FARMER wrote as follows to a distinguished scientific agriculturist, to whom he felt under obligations for introducing a variety of swine: "Respected Sir—I went yesterday to the cattle show. I found a vast number of pigs, and I was astonished at not seeing you there."

OUT in Minnesota they have learned the value of suffrage. At a recent election concerning the location of a county seat, the 2,000 registered voters deposited 8,294 votes. They voted early and voted often, and whilst the one side cast their average three votes apiece, the other cast thirteen votes apiece, and carried the day by a triumphant majority.

AN EXAMINATION into the charges of outrageous cruelty and corruption against the State Lunatic Asylum, has resulted in producing overwhelming proof of brutality to inmates. It has been established that patients have been knocked down, and beaten, and choked, and kicked, and dragged by the heels, handcuffed, and otherwise outrageously treated, and that women have been unjustly imprisoned on false charges.

and we would advise him to go to some good medium, and ask for a communication from some living, immortal spirit, in the Summer Land. If duped by some pretender, it is no reason that he should make a wholesale denunciation against those who are not duped, and who do communicate—not with the dead, but the living.

Again, he says: "They deny the power to any but a selected few." Let me say that that assertion savors too much of popular theology, to be accepted by any true disciple of Spiritualism. I have been an investigator of Spiritualism for ten years; and I have yet to hear such assertion made by a Spiritualist. On the contrary, we say that each and every child of earth can be the recipient of this divine blessing. I believe in so much of Scripture as this: "Knock and it shall be opened unto you; seek and ye shall find." And, thank God! there are millions in our country to-day, who can testify to the truth of these promises.

Again, he says: "They tell us that our departed friends are cognizant of all our doings. Said I to one of this peculiar faith, do you say that my father, who has been in his grave some years, and who, I believe, is in heaven, sees and knows my troubles, and can feel for me on earth? If this be true, then you tell me that my father is in hell!" One of this peculiar faith! There he is wrong again: there is no faith about it. Faith, according to Paul, is "the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." This does not apply to Spiritualism at all. If Spiritualism rested upon no firmer foundation than that, it would soon be going the same road with old Theology—into oblivion. There is no faith in the matter; it is *positive knowledge* of demonstrated facts. This is the foundation upon which Spiritualism is based. The writer thinks that, if his father is cognizant of all his doings, his troubles, he must be in hell. Well, we won't quarrel with him about that; not knowing how he conducts himself, we have nothing to say; but I would like to ask one question: admitting, for the sake of argument, the theological theory of heaven and hell, I would ask if the exit of the spirit from the body into heaven destroys all paternal feeling of the father for the son—if all interest in his welfare ceases at the separation of the spirit from the body? If the writer believes this, will he inform me upon what foundation such a theory is based—by what mighty process the pure, unselfish love of a father is changed to the coolest indifference? There is no law, human or divine, that will sanction any such theory. All the better feelings of one's nature revolt at the idea. If the father loses love for his son, so will the mother for her babe, the sister for the brother, the wife for the husband; all kindred ties will be severed, when the soul makes its exit from the glorious world into that gloomy seven-by-nine heaven. I pray that I may never get into it; rather let me be a dweller in the abode of darkness; for there I will find earth's noblest souls—souls that were bound to me by the mystic tie of love, that death could not sever. I think my friend must have been laboring under an overdose of Theology, administered by one of those who "go about like a roaring lion, seeking whom they may devour," while giving expression to such thoughts. How much more beautiful and Godlike to believe and teach, that God is the Father of all, and that all mankind are brothers—each individual so forming a link in the great chain, that one defect or discordant jar in any individual is communicated to the whole, and it is for the benefit of the whole that the defect should be repaired. Thus, not only does his father feel an interest in his welfare, but every other soul is bound to him by a divine cord of love, and cannot be in perfect happiness while he suffers.

The writer winds up his mighty "blow" at Spiritualism by admitting that some spirits do communicate; but he thinks they are the spirits of those who are doomed to wander about unseen, to work evil on those who do evil. This is the old argument, in regard to a Devil and evil spirits; it don't need much comment, because it has been pretty well sifted already. It was the argument used by a reverend gentleman of this city a short time ago, in a course of lectures against Spiritualism. He admitted that spirits could communicate, but denominated them evil. Now, as there are different degrees of development, spiritually as well as physically, I would like to know where the line of demarcation comes in. How bad must a spirit be, to enjoy the glorious privilege of communication with friends in the form? I admit that my motives for asking are purely selfish, because I wish to enjoy this privilege myself. But it is queer that these bad spirits teach us to love one another—to be honest and upright in all our dealings with our fellow-men—to walk humbly, deal justly, and love mercy—to love our enemies, and pray for those who despitefully use us! I should think they would fear that such teachings would make men good, and thus these devils would be cheated of their prey! That great book, the Bible, says, "A house divided against itself cannot stand; a corrupt tree cannot bring forth good fruit; ye cannot gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles; if Satan rise up against himself, and be divided, he cannot stand, but hath an end," and many more passages of the same tenor.

But, to conclude this article, I would simply say, to those who make objections against Spiritualism like those of the *Gem*, investigate before you condemn; for surely the writer of that article knows no more of Spiritualism than a child—not even the proper definition of the word.

o. c. i.

SENATOR SUMNER.—In a correspondence of the *Western Post*, of St. Louis, from Bloomington, Ill., the following anecdote is told of Senator Sumner: On the evening of October 21, he lectured in Bloomington, and the hall of Schroeder's Opera House was filled to overflowing. On this occasion, Mr. Sumner gave his American friends the following account of his change of views:

"I was educated as strict a Puritan as you were. Twenty-six years ago I visited Germany, and spent my first Sunday at Aix-la-Chapelle. Ignorant of German, I hardly knew how to spend the day, when a crowd, moving in a certain direction, attracted my attention. I followed the multitude and found myself in an open space. On a little hill some happy old men were playing on some musical instruments, and on the grass children were merrily playing. Everybody was happy. I was completely charmed, and asked myself the question, 'Why cannot Americans enjoy the Sabbath in a similar way?' From that hour my Puritanical coat was too small for me; it split, and since that day I have had higher and broader views of things."

